

## ENERGY POLICY

**HON. TOM UDALL**

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2003*

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 6, the Energy Policy Act of 2003. We should be using this opportunity today to pass an effective and balanced energy bill that will help conserve our nation's resources and lessen our dependence on energy sources that are detrimental to our environment and even our national security. Instead, the bill being debated today harms the environment, threatens public health, endangers wildlife, and hurts consumers.

I believe a balanced national energy policy would be one that helps consumers by increasing energy production and reducing energy demand. Further, I feel that America's current and future energy needs should be met through a balanced approach that supports our fundamental environmental values. We must focus on becoming more energy efficient, investing in innovative technologies, and ensuring that energy markets are fair and competitive. We must also focus on reducing America's dependence on international oil suppliers and developing clean and renewable energy sources. Unfortunately, this bill accomplishes none of these goals.

Before consideration of the bill, I testified before the Rules Committee and requested that I be allowed to offer three amendments. The first would have required retail electricity suppliers to obtain 15% of their power production from a portfolio of renewable energy resources by 2020 and within 5 years add an additional 5%. This would allow us to enhance our nation's energy independence and national security while lowering prices for consumers by mitigating the effects of energy shortages and natural gas spikes. In addition, I believe including a Renewable Portfolio Standard in our nation's energy policy would create jobs and expand economic development, while simultaneously reducing air pollution and the threat of global warming.

The second amendment I hoped to bring to the floor was in support of the thousands of farmers, ranchers and homeowners across the west that are directly impacted by oil, gas and coal bed methane development activities on their lands. This amendment would have required surface use agreements between landowners and the oil and gas industry prior to any development of subsurface mineral rights owned by the federal government. Many farmers and ranchers own split estate interests, meaning that they own the surface resources and the federal government owns the subsurface mineral rights that it leases to the oil and gas industry. Currently, it is not required that the oil and gas companies repair and clean up a project site during or after its completion. Instead, the surface use agreements are only voluntary. Oftentimes as a result, many surface owners suffer loss of income, impairment of water quality, erosion and contamination of soil, harm to livestock and wildlife species, and they have no recourse because they did not have surface use agreements with the oil and gas companies. My amendment would have given these landowners the legal recourse they deserve.

Unfortunately, neither of these amendments was accepted by the Rules Committee. However, I was able to offer before the full House an important amendment that would strike an unnecessary and potentially dangerous subsidy included in H.R. 6 pertaining to uranium in situ leach mining. As written, the subsidy allots \$30 million to the domestic uranium industry. The in situ leach mining procedure could cause radioactive uranium and other toxic chemicals to leach into groundwater. The area where this mining could potentially be undertaken in my district is near a high-quality aquifer, which is the sole source of scarce drinking water for over 10,000 people of the Navajo Nation in New Mexico. This subsidy compounds past disasters by promoting mining that could have dangerous health and environmental implications. Although my amendment was defeated, the roll call made it clear that there is bipartisan backing for striking this unfair and unwise subsidy. As this bill is negotiated in conference, I will continue to work to protect my constituents in New Mexico who have suffered so much from uranium related activities near their homes.

As we move into the future, we must act responsibly in ways that take into account the changing landscape of the world's energy situation instead of exacerbating the already dire energy dependence problem our nation faces. Conservation—getting the maximum value out of every bit of energy we use—must become a central feature of our nation's energy philosophy. We praise those who maximize the value of every dollar they spend; we should do the same with our energy. America should prize efficient and productive use of all our important resources, including energy. Conservation is real, achievable, and crucial.

Again, in those areas, this energy bill falls short. H.R. 6 weakens consumers protections, allows companies to contaminate water, allots over \$18 billion in unnecessary subsidies to big oil and gas corporations, and takes one more step toward drilling in the untouched wilderness of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). This will not enhance conservation or provide for the security of the energy supply for the American people as proponents of this bill claim. What it will do is reward the energy companies and leave the responsibility of keeping secure the nation's energy supply to yet another generation.

It is my hope that a conference committee will help produce a more sound compromise energy bill that does not threaten the future of either the environment or the country's energy needs. I will continue to work to see that our nation implements an energy plan that is balanced and addresses environmental concerns in a way that also provides for our continued economic success.

## A TRIBUTE TO MELISSA ELLIS BARTLETT

**HON. RICHARD BURR**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2003*

Mr. BURR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a fellow North Carolinian and an outstanding member of our community, Melissa Ellis Bartlett. I commend her for her dedication to children and education.

Melissa has been a distinguished teacher for the past 18 years, sharing her gift of teaching both nationally and internationally. For the past four years, Melissa has taught at Iredell-Statesville Schools, where she is a cherished language arts educator. Previously, Melissa taught social studies and worked with at-risk students in central North Carolina. She also taught English in Cairo, Egypt, and remedial reading to students in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Melissa's commitment to her students and her excellence in the classroom has brought her to Washington today to be honored by President George W. Bush at the National Teachers of the Year ceremony. Melissa represents the finest of teaching professionals nationwide, and I am proud of all that she has accomplished. Teachers who share Melissa's dedication are a true treasure.

I ask my colleagues and fellow North Carolinians to join me in extending our congratulations and heartfelt thanks to Melissa Bartlett for her years of selfless service. May she continue to inspire and enlighten students for many years to come.

## INTRODUCTION OF THE MILITARY PAY COMPATIBILITY ACT OF 2003

**HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2003*

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Military Pay Compatibility Act of 2003. Joining me is my dear friend and colleague Representative IKE SKELTON, the ranking Member of the House Armed Services Committee. He is a man of great wisdom and preeminence with respect to all things military and I appreciate his guidance and support.

In short, this legislation will ensure that military pay raises keep pace with civilian pay growth.

Please allow me to explain why this is important. Military pay tables were overhauled in 1971, with the advent of the all-volunteer force, and basic pay was set to provide reasonable pay comparability with private sector pay for civilian workers with similar skills, education and experience.

But military raises were capped for budgetary reasons during the 1970's, and serious retention and readiness shortfalls followed. These problems were addressed with double-digit raises in 1981 and 1982, after which it was generally acknowledged that military pay was reasonably comparable with private sector pay.

Despite this hard-learned lesson, the extended retention rebound of the 1980's, coupled with rising budget deficits, led multiple Administrations and Congress to continue capping military raises below private sector pay growth in 12 of the next 16 years.

In 1999, the cumulative military pay raise shortfall since 1982 had reached 13.5 percent—predictably accompanied by a new retention and readiness crisis.

Congress responded by enacting provisions in the FY 2000 Defense Authorization Act specifying that, for years 2000 through 2006, each year's military pay raise is to exceed the civilian pay growth, as measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost